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L E T T E R

TO THE

Rt. Hon. EDMUND BURKE,

ON THE SUBJECT OF

HIS LATE CHARGES

AGAINST THE

GOVERNOR-GENERAL

OF

B E N G A L:

*Detector*

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L O N D O N:

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LETTER, &c.

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RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR,

I CANNOT but condole with you on the unwelcome publication of Mr. Hastings's late Letter to the Court of Directors; not merely because the honour which, as a most able composition, it reflects upon the talents of its Author, must naturally be grating to an enmity so rancorous and implacable as Your's; but (what is infinitely more mortifying) because the conscious warmth of innocence, the irresistible force of truth, and the

naked display of fact, with which every line of it is replete, have at once confuted, overturned and done away the whole of those frivolous, indecent, and unsupported charges, which for two Years together have been obtruded on the public, from the Select Committee. I say *the whole*, altho' that wonderful letter comprehends a compleat summary only of the grounds and circumstances of the revolution at Benares. But as the expulsion of Cheyr Sing was your strong ground, and as your remarks have been particularly intemperate and acrimonious on that subject; a candid, ample, and satisfactory exculpation from all your criminatory discussions on this one article, secures an unprejudiced hearing, and, (as you will one day feel,) a thorough acquittal in all the rest.——

This revolution at Benares appears indeed to have occupied an exclusive share of your attention. From the first moment that imperfect intelligence of the transaction arrived, you fastened on it with an eagerness that exhibited nothing less than impartiality: and precipitately hurried the crude materials into the House of Commons in your second  
Report,

Report, before it was possible, that any clear or liberal judgment could be formed of the merits of the affair. As soon, however, as the uncertainty of vague surmise had given place to somewhat of consistent information, Governor Johnstone, in one of the most powerful pieces of oratory that ever dignified a popular Assembly, turned the tide of opinion decidedly against you, and established the prudence, the justice, the policy of the Governor General's conduct, on grounds which temerity itself, urged by all the impulse of malevolence, would hardly have attempted to undermine. But Your purposes are not so easily shaken; Your versatility is not so speedily foiled; and I can readily discover in your late Supplement to the second Report (which indeed you may well blush not to have been the first syllable you have uttered on that topic) as many objections aimed at the Governor's admirable Speech, as at the Narrative of Mr. Hastings, which for the first time you have now had the opportunity to discuss, and whom you had previously vilified, reprobated, and condemned *with half his story untold.*—Here too your triumph is miserably interrupted, by the un-  
seasonable



seasonable arrival of the Governor General's most excellent Letter,—addressed indeed, to the Court of Directors, but more immediately applicable to You: For They, to say the truth, have been but too much the humble instrument of your passions, and their dictates seem but Echoes to the Reports of the Select Committee.—You have, Sir, been singularly industrious in precluding from the Councils of Leadenhall-Street, every possible chance or pretension to originality, in the Condemnation of any of Mr. Hastings's public measures: And I have now before me in the Contents of your ninth and tenth Reports, and in your Supplement to the second, anticipated abuse, and prompted Anathemas on almost every subject, which is likely to be agitated in the Court of Directors, as matter for their general Letters to Bengal in the approaching season. The opinions, the politics, the commands of the East-India Company originate in the Select Committee Chamber, and *their* correspondence is become little more than the vehicle of Mr. Burke's speculative incoherencies and injurious personalities. It is not therefore more extraordinary, that Mr. Hastings's late Letter, containing a complete  
 refutation

refutation of certain articles alledged and maintained by the Court of Directors, should still more pointedly meet the topics on which you have since so unmercifully insisted : than that the same objections started many months ago by the Directors, should at a subsequent period occupy a distinguished place in one of Your Reports, amplified, embellished, and improved with all your fertility of invention and artifice of arrangement. In compliment to the reluctance with which I know you must quit Cheyt Sing's cause, and to gratify your ears once more with the pleasing sound of that favourite name, I shall in the course of my correspondence, take the liberty of adding a few observations, however superfluous, to the manly, victorious, and conclusive arguments of the Governor General. And though in the present state of things, humbled, (as you must be) by the consciousness of detection in premeditated untruths ; debased (as you most assuredly are) in the eyes of the public, as much for the gross illiberality of your attacks on some of the brightest characters of the age, as for Your unblushing patronage of convicted defaulters ; and consigned (as you will very soon experience)

ence) to the scorn and neglect of those very colleagues, whose purposes your duplicity had served, or whose sympathy your necessities had excited, there can be little probability, that the poison you have already administered, should ever work its malignant operation, and still less that you should hereafter be suffered to litter the Speaker's table with a fresh dose : I cannot let your unprecedented malice shelter itself under the obscurity of public indifference, without once more casting down the gauntlet of defiance to all your attempts for affixing the slightest stigma of delinquency on the character of Mr. Hastings. I have already, Sir, with all humility attended your progress through eight voluminous Reports : I narrowly scrutinized their several contents, and have imparted the result of my observations to the public. I have yet to learn, that any thing false, or injurious, or uncandid, has fallen from my pen : my tale has been plain and unvarnished, but it has not been denied, and it cannot be confuted. I now enter the lists with confidence. The world is apprized of the side on which truth has hitherto combated, and the half of your assertions is already

ready



ready disbelieved before I write a syllable : the rest are suspected for their mere plausibility. Mr. Burke is no longer a formidable opponent ; obstinately industrious in the ruin of a man whom he cannot imitate, he loses his temper in proportion as the task becomes more difficult : and endeavours by the scurrility of his language to make up for the deficiency of his reasonings. A Fencing master in a passion is disarmed by the meanest of his Scholars : and I am not the only antagonist who has taken advantage of your very fury to aim, a successful attack. You have read the Letters of *a Citizen* in the Morning Herald — You have seen two Letters from Major Scott, on the insinuations contained in the ninth Report : Should your doughty Chairman be ever permitted or induced to stagger to the Speaker's Chair with another Ream of sophistical absurdities, half the town will start up to dissect and expose them. Every man who can hold a pen, will employ it in the detection of some fresh error or untruth, and your Reports will excite a disgust and disrespect as general as that which hath of late notoriously attended your speeches.

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After

After all, can you suppose that the public, eager to testify their exalted sense of Mr. Hastings's political merits, and to taste their immediate advantages, will stoop to dabble in the miserable dirt of your 9th Report? Can you flatter yourself, that the stale and wretched dregs of Mr. Francis's criminatory manufactory, still retain venom enough to hurt the Governor-General? For the despicable insipidity of such a second-hand potion silent contempt is the proper antidote. But that you may not find one source of triumph even in the escape from palpable detection, I will here hastily answer the most virulent of the charges brought forward in your 9th Report, under their several heads.

1st. Nundcomar's execution.

You write (Ninth Report, page 7.) "The sufferer, the Rajah Nundcomar, appears at the very time of this extraordinary prosecution, a discoverer of some particulars of illicit gain, then charged upon Mr. Hastings, the Governor General."——

Major

Major Scott has informed you with truth, that Mr. Hastings neither did, nor could interfere in the Trial or Execution of Nund-comar : and I now add, that the Raja was *no discoverer*, (for he could never substantiate a single discovery) but a lying informer; that in his last moments, he thought of nothing less than of making good his assertions respecting the Governor General's peculations, and that the paper written the night before his execution, which was afterwards burnt as a libel, did not contain a syllable relative to that subject. A person who translated that paper, from the Raja's own writing, is ready to swear to the fact.

2d. New Plan of Remittance, Page 19.

The Company's existence in Europe is founded on commerce; and their Sales at the India-House are the only means of keeping up the necessary circulation of cash. It is possible that the Company *might* subsist, and it is fair to suppose it fully equal to the trial of subsisting for one year without any actual gain whatsoever: but without circulation it is impossible that it should subsist at all. The



Bengal government finding it impracticable to convert any part of their current revenues into goods for Europe, and being therefore unable to secure to the Company its customary profits, were obliged, as their last resource, to advert to a plan for ensuring, at least, the circulation of cash. For however the Committee may be inclined to doubt the fact, it is most certain, that "such a scheme" (as that originally proposed by the Council-general, or any scheme) "is preferable to the *total suspension of trade*,"—which in my opinion implies neither more nor less than *instant bankruptcy*. When the first outline of the plan arrived, the Select Committee, with their usual alacrity, went to work upon the discovery and display of its every probable or possible disadvantage: and had, it appears, proceeded so far as to leave it dubious (*to themselves only*,) whether it would not have been almost as convenient to have suspended the trade entirely; when another dispatch brought word that the first plan had been set aside altogether; and that the Council-General had found the means of negotiating a loan for the provision of the current investment (notwithstanding all their distresses and difficulties) at a rate nearly as favour-

favourable (and much more so in respect to the *time* at which the drafts are to be given) as that which to the Dutch, Danes, and Portuguese, has been for some years past the main spring of all their Indian commerce. Candour surely required that objections to a scheme which *had not taken place*, should have been suppressed ; at least that its *defects* should have been contrasted with the comparative *merits* of the new one. So far from it, that the Committee having laboured with all their sophistical acrimony, to deny and condemn the original scheme, gravely inform us, (when their bile is exhausted) that *no such scheme exists* : and then proceed with the same impartiality of statement, and delicacy of observation, to comment on *that* which has been substituted in its place. “ The situation of the “ Company,” they observe (Page 22) “ under “ this perpetual variation of system in their “ investment, is truly perplexing.” Granted. But this perplexity is an evil inherent in the very core and constitution of commerce. And indeed I am much surprized, that neither Mr. Burke, nor any of his respectable friends, should have known, or heard, or surmised, that in all situations, a necessity of borrowing money

money subjects the borrower to a thousand perplexities in the mode, and that even the credit of the British nation will not enable a Minister to dictate the terms of his loan.

3d. Opium Contract given to Mr. Sullivan.

After much misrepresentation and false reasoning on the subject of this Contract, all of which Major Scott has satisfactorily refuted, you say, Page 39, " Your Committee examining Mr. Higginson, late a Member of the Board of Trade on that subject, were informed, that this Contract, very soon after the making, *was generally understood* at Calcutta, to have been sold to this Mr. Benn—but that he could not *particularize the sum* for which it had been assigned; and that Mr. Benn had afterwards sold it to Mr. Young." You then, in the true spirit of Committee-inference, *pronounce upon the fact*: " By this *transaction* it *appears clearly*, that the Contract was given to Mr. Sullivan for no other purpose than to supply him with a sum of money." What *transaction* do you mean, and where does any thing *appear so clearly*? Mr. Higginson states a general *report*,



*port*, of which he does not pretend to ascertain the circumstances, and with you it is in a moment transformed, by hocus pocus, into a *transaction*. Surely such a dealer in vernacular literature as yourself must have recollected, that, "one should never believe above half " of a Report." (even setting those of the Select Committee out of the question.) Possibly, Sir, upon second enquiry, you might find the whole transaction to exist only in the Report, of which *your* Report is the echo, and that Mr. Sullivan holds the contract *for himself* to this day.

4th. Colonel M<sup>c</sup>Lean's offer of resignation in the name of Mr. Hastings.

In the 52d page of the Ninth Report, you have condescended to make use of this pitiful story ; and you remark on it, that "a sanction " was hereby given to all future defiance of " every authority in this kingdom." You forget, that *twice* since that period, the first Minister of this country has effectually annulled the whole transaction by a parliamentary re-appointment of Mr. Hastings; and that even supposing the resignation at that  
time

time valid (which his Majesty's Judges in India denied, and which neither the Directors, nor the King's Ministers, nor you, with all your logic, have attempted to establish *upon proof*) Mr. Hastings, under the two subsequent acts of parliament, is altogether a new Governor-General, and acts under a new commission, totally independent of the former.

5th. Disobedience of Orders, page 54, &c.

The House of Commons, the Ministry, the whole nation, are equally sick of your nauseous tautology, and incorrigible misrepresentations, respecting the removal of Messrs. Bristow and Fowke, from their offices. Major Scott, both in his evidence before your Committee, and in his printed letter to you, has explained the merits of their removal in the most explicit terms. The necessity of political confidence between the principal and subordinates in the administration of a kingdom, and in the intercourse between different nations, is surely as apparent, as *that* of a *good understanding* between the head of an office and his clerks. And then that *You*, Sir, of all others, should so long and so loudly exclaim  
against

against such sort of exertions !—But I beg your pardon.—When your Ninth Report was fabricated, you might flatter yourself that the gauze of hypocrisy which had so repeatedly succeeded in concealing the real designs of Mr. Burke, would prove ample enough to cloak, and substantial enough to hide the mysteries of Messrs. Powel and Bembridge. Mr. Hastings removed Messrs. Bristow and Fowke, to make room for others whom he could trust, and *without whom he could not execute to advantage the business of his station.* You are, perhaps, by this time, convinced that he was right.

6th. Removal of Mahomed Reza Khan,  
Page 58, &c.

If you will take the trouble to turn to page 22 of your 5th Report, you will find the majority of the Council-General at Calcutta, to have “ Resolved, that the Board recommend  
“ Mahomed Reza Khan, to the Nabob, to be  
“ Minister of the Government, and *guardian*  
“ *of his minority.*” Upon this appointment the Directors express their sentiments, Page 24, as follows, “ We were always of opinion,

C

“ that



“ that an able, ostensible Minister, *during the*  
 “ *minority of the Nabob*, would be necessary.”

Is it not clear by implication, that the Council-General alluded to, and the Directors understood, the probability of a change in this appointment, when the Nabob's minority should be expired? Mahomed Reza Khan's behaviour appears to have been uniformly disgusting to the Nabob; and the least surely that the lineal descendant of the acknowledged Sovereign of the country (himself also titular sovereign) could claim, was an exemption from the interference of a man whom he detested, in his private affairs; from the domestic tyranny of a native, certainly his inferior, and nominally his subject.—If his inexperience rendered some controul necessary, that controul must be much less galling, if exerted through the immediate influence of the actual government, and by one of those Foreigners, whose personal and unquestioned superiority had acquired them the decided dominion of the whole country.

I now come to your favorite subject, *the*  
*revolution of Benares*, wherein you observe  
 (1st

(1st page, supplement to 2d report) that  
 “Cheyt Sing, son and successor to Bulwant  
 “Sing,—was deprived of all rank, power and  
 “command in that Zemindarry, *which was*  
 “*the inheritance of his ancestors.*” How you  
 came by this *tail-piece* of your information, I  
 will not presume to ask; for although I am  
 sure that Cheyt Sing himself did *not*, in fact,  
 succeed to the Zemindarry by any legal and  
 authentic *title of inheritance*; his ancestors, for  
 ought I know, might have held and availed  
 themselves of such a claim some generations  
 back, and you may have been exclusively fa-  
 voured with a view of the *title deeds*. This  
 circumstance, however, of the *inheritance*, was  
 providently inserted to secure a more ready  
 assent to your remark, subsequently intro-  
 duced (page 5) “Your Committee do not  
 “find the Governor-General well founded in  
 “his assertion, that it was from *his influence*  
 “that Cheyt Sing obtained the *first legal title*  
 “that his family ever possessed, of property  
 “in the land, in 1773,” &c. &c. This ob-  
 jection, which cost you near two pages to  
 discuss (altho’ you grant it be nothing to the  
 purpose, but to shew that no objection comes  
 amiss) rests simply upon “*incontestible proof,*”

(which I shall not dispute with you) "that  
 "Rajah Cheyt Sing had *actually enjoyed all the*  
 "rights of a Zemindar three years before that  
 "period."—But you ought to have proved  
 that Cheyt Sing *then*, or at *any time before*,  
 possessed a *legal title* to those rights. Mr.  
 Hastings's assertion goes only to the *acquisition of the title*, not to the *enjoyment of the*  
*rights*; Those had been held by interposition,  
 by connivance, by usurpation,—by what you  
 will,—*but not by a legal title*. Let me ask you,  
 Sir, what you understand by "*a Zemindarry?*" is it not an hereditary Fief? is it not  
 the necessary inherent property of a Zemindarry  
 to be *hereditary*; and is it not in proof that  
 Cheyt Sing did *not* come to it by *inheritance*?  
 You well know (for it is to be found in the  
 10th and 11th pages of your 2d Report) that  
 when Rajah Bulwant Sing died, the Govern-  
 ment of Bengal informed the Court of Di-  
 rectors, "of the consequence it was to their  
 "affairs, that the succession to the Zemin-  
 "darry of Benares should continue in the  
 "family, but *that it was a delicate point to ac-*  
 "*complish with the Vizier*,—that the occasion  
 "demanded immediate dispatch, and the Pre-  
 "sident was requested to write to the Vizier  
 "accordingly,



“ accordingly, in favor of the son of the late  
 “ *Rajah*, in terms that would least awake  
 “ his jealousy.—A jealous, suspicious dis-  
 “ position of the old *Rajah*—may possibly  
 “ have been the reason why the son *was not*  
 “ included in the treaty of 1765, for had he ex-  
 “ pressed a wish to secure the *Zemindarry* in his  
 “ own family, at a time when the *Vizier* was  
 “ receiving back his Country from our hands,  
 “ a doubt can scarcely be formed but it  
 “ would have been attended with success:  
 “ but suspicious probably of the conse-  
 “ quences that his son should think he had a  
 “ right to the succession,—his whole aim seem’d  
 “ to center in self-security.” The *Vizier*, it  
 clearly appears, had given *Bulwant Sing* a  
*Cowlnama* for himself only: the treaty of *Alla-*  
*habad* expressed no more (2d Report, page  
 10.) *Cheynt Sing* was admitted (“at the earnest  
 “ recommendation and request” of the *Bengal-*  
*Council* (page 11) and not upon any legal title  
 or claim of right whatsoever) to hold the *Ze-*  
*mindarry* on the same terms as his Father, (i. e.  
*in capite*.) At this time therefore the tenure  
 was at least precarious: the *Vizier* “con-  
 “ sidered his former act as of little validity,”  
 (page 12) and the *Council of Bengal* must  
 have

have had some suspicions of the same nature, by empowering Mr. Hastings to "*renew the stipulation*" (page 11). The Governor accordingly, to remove all ambiguity, changed the very essence of the tenure, by obtaining from the Vizier an engagement, "confirm-  
 "ing to Rajah Cheyt Sing *and his posterity*,  
 "the stipulations formerly made in behalf of  
 "his father, Bulwant Sing."—This therefore establishes beyond a possibility of cavil, what the Governor General asserts in his narrative: "Cheyt Sing obtained from our influence, *exerted by myself*, the first legal title that  
 "his family ever possessed of *property in the*  
 "land, (mark that) of which he, till then,  
 "was only the Aumil, and of which he be-  
 "came the acknowledged Zemindar, by a sun-  
 "nud granted to him by the Nabob, Sujah  
 "Dowlah, *at my instance*, in the month of  
 "September, 1773. Mr. Hastings there-  
 fore, even in this preliminary article (which  
 you have gone out of your way to overset,) in  
 this assertion, "which appeared quite contra-  
 "dictory to the matter contained in their  
 " (the Committee's) former Report," is, as  
 usual, manifestly in the right, and you are in  
 the wrong. And now having disincumbered  
 Cheyt

Cheynt Sing of the *inheritance of his ancestors*, I will, with your leave, proceed to examine thole *rights*, which, whether as Aumil, Tributary Zemindar, or *Prince and Noble of the Country*, you are so anxious to invest him with. Your mode of ascertaining these rights is peculiar to the system adopted for the general use of your India Reports. It consists *not* in quoting the different articles of the deed, by which he holds the Zemindarry from the Company: but in garbling from different minutes of the different Members of the Council General at different periods, their different opinions as to *what indulgence* it would be politically useful and proper to allow the Raja, as his general rights. That the Gentlemen of the Council should thus settle among themselves (Supplement to 2d Report, pages 13 and 14) what sort of privileges they would be pleased to admit for his rights, amounts in my mind to a proof, that in point of *legal title* or established pretension, he possessed no rights but such as were common to other subjects of the Mogul Empire. The separate opinions delivered in the Council-General, which are so often invidiously quoted through your Supplement, are by no means



means binding on the Company at large on any other principle, than as they became the grounds of those public instruments, by which Cheyt Sing held his Territory. It would be very amusing, if all the discordant sentiments uttered in his Majesty's Cabinet, were to be appealed to as rules of State, or ties upon Government. I cannot however quit these opinions of Council, without a short tribute of applause to Mr. Barwell's accurate experience of Asiatic tempers, and well-told prognostication of Cheyt Sing's defection, six years before it happened. — "The Rajah should  
 " have the strongest tie of interest to support  
 " our Government, in case of any future rup-  
 " ture with the Soubah of Oude. To make  
 " this his interest, he must not be tributary  
 " to the English Government; for from the  
 " instant he becomes its tributary, from that  
 " moment we may expect him to side against  
 " us, and *by taking advantage of the troubles*  
 " *and commotions that may arise, attempt to disbur-*  
 " *den himself of his pecuniary obligations.*" (Sup-  
 plement, page 13.) The Governor-General  
 had uniformly recommended favourable terms  
 for Cheyt Sing, under the idea, (Page 12)  
 that, " by proper encouragement and pro-  
 " tection

" tention he may prove a profitable depen-  
 " dent, an useful barrier, and even a *powerful*  
 " ally to the Company." But these favour-  
 able terms never could become *rights*, unless  
 ratified by the Sunnud and Cabooleat, which  
 united the two parties: And a man who  
 could refuse to contribute 5 lacks of rupees  
 out of 30, and to furnish 1000 cavalry out of  
 above 1700 (see Appendix) to the relief of  
 his Sovereign's most pressing exigencies, cer-  
 tainly proved himself a most disaffected sub-  
 ject, and but little qualified for an useful  
 ally. If Mr. Hastings, in 1773, " resisted an  
 " application, made in very earnest terms by  
 " the Vizier, to dispossess Cheyt Sing of his  
 " forts of Bidjegur and Lutyfpoor," (page  
 15) it was not so much on account of the  
 Raja's independent right to them, as for the  
 purpose of securing to the Company a Bar-  
 rier against that very Vizier,—a measure  
 which was always uppermost in his thoughts:  
 and though it be true, that in 1775, it was  
 the Governor-General's opinion (page 14)  
 " that the perpetual and independent pos-  
 " session of the Zemindarry of Benares, and  
 " its dependencies, should be *confirmed and*  
 " *guaranteed* to Cheyt Sing, and his heirs for  
 D " ever"—

“ever”—it is no less in proof, that “the  
 “Governor-General’s propositions did *not* ex-  
 “clusively form the basis of the treaty  
 “with Asoph-ul-Dowla;” and therefore this  
 opinion, that Cheyt Sing *ought* to have been  
 totally freed from the *remains* of his then *vassalage*,  
 cannot operate against his conduct,  
 under an agreement different from that pro-  
 posed by him, and upon a system, which only  
 transferred those “*remains of vassalage*,” what-  
 ever they might be, by which Cheyt Sing  
 was then bound, from one Sovereign to ano-  
 ther. Admitting, however, *all* the *speculative*  
*rights*, with which the Select Committee have  
 been pleased to invest Cheyt Sing, I do not  
 find among them, even by implication, the  
*right of defending himself by the sword* against  
 his *lawful Sovereign*. That at least is a right  
 not compatible with the principles of Asiatic  
 Government; and the Committee’s miserable  
 subterfuge in his apology, does but little ho-  
 nor either to their logic or their politics.  
 “The Rajah’s conduct on this trying and  
 “tempting occasion (supplement, page 18)  
 “does not appear to have been that of an  
 “enterprizing Chief, impatient under the ex-  
 “ercise of any kind of superiority over him,  
 “and



" and therefore resolved to aim at indepen-  
 " dence, whenever the means of attainment  
 " were in his power ; *on the contrary*, his ob-  
 " ject was to escape from confinement, and  
 " then to fly to his forts *for the security of his*  
 " *person.*" Has the Governor-General ever  
 displayed so sanguinary a disposition ? or was  
 there within the limits of conjecture any  
 cause, that Cheyt Sing should be apprehen-  
 sive for the security of his person ? It was his  
*person* that Mr. Hastings meant to *secure*, and  
 thought he had secured, by the arrest : and  
 would the Committee now insinuate it as their  
 opinion, that this very arrest gave Cheyt  
 Sing a right to massacre two companies of  
 Seapoys with their European Officers ; and  
*that* not on the instant of surprise and sudden  
 impulse of passion, but on a deliberate pause,  
 in the moment of calm reflection, *in cold blood* !  
 To what offences in your opinion, Sir, would  
 the *Crimen læsæ Majestatis* apply ? Had the  
 legal, the acknowledged Sovereign *no right at*  
*all*, as *Sovereign*, and was no submission due  
 from Cheyt Sing, *as a subject* ? After all, to  
 what specific act of the Governor-General  
 can Cheyt Sing's conduct be attributed ?  
 Not to the intended fine, for of that he is

probably ignorant to this hour. Not to the arrest, for he had "quietly submitted to that arrest, and sent a letter to the Governor-General, which indicates the most perfect obedience."—(page 16) So far from having subsequently received any cause for fresh alarm, Mr. Hastings had written to him in terms expressly calculated to encourage him under his "apparent despondency," and the Rajah had answered him, "*I am entirely free from concern and apprehension.*" Yet, on the same day, within a few hours, our troops were massacred, the Rajah fled to his forts, the standard of revolt was set up, contagious rebellion spread through the whole Country,—every hand was prepared to arm, and arms were in readiness for every hand; and we are now told, in the shuffling cant of an Old-Bailey excuse, that "his *object* was to escape from confinement." The extent, however, of his military preparations, clearly evince his predetermined views of resistance, in case of any attack, and by constructive evidence convict him of *treason*, even before a sword was drawn: His desperate conduct, in consequence of a mere exertion of civil power, effectually

effectually annihilated *all his rights*, and completed the measure of his guilt.

As your Committee have spared no pains, however ill-bestowed, to establish the *independent rights* of Rajah Cheyt Sing, as a *Zemindar*, it would have been no more than decently impartial, had they given themselves the trouble to enquire whether or not the Company, 'as immediate sovereign of the Zemindarry, did not by the very constitution of the state and the nature of all Mogul tenures, stand possessed also of some *clear, original, and inherent rights*, of which it could not by any partial or temporary agreement, be divested, so long as it should continue to be the acknowledged paramount. Of this sort of rights, in my humble opinion, *military service* is the very first. It is indeed most notoriously the grand pervading principle of all feudal governments. In the most flourishing times of the Hindostanic Emperors, even the personal attendance of the great Rajahs and Zemindars was constantly required and exacted both at court and in camp : all the European travellers of the two last centuries, concur in testifying, that the guard of the Emperor's  
person



person was committed to the dependent Rajahs. The Ayeen-y Acberree (or description of the arrangements of the Mogul empire under Acber) contains as well an enumeration of the forces kept by each Zemindar, as the quantum of tribute in which he was assessed; and it was to this established and uncontrollable system of the empire, that Mr. Barwell alluded in his minute (2d Report, 27 page) "An acquisition of revenue and *military force*, I suppose to have been annexed to the grant of the Zemindarry of Benares and Gauzipore to the Company." He was undoubtedly right, for the transfer of the sovereignty included both. Cheyt Sing maintained a considerable number of troops, and by the feudal tenure of all Zemindarries, was bound to furnish his quota of them, in case of war, to his paramount. But the necessity under which our government lay, of demanding *in money* the amount of this quota, instead of burthening itself with a set of ill-paid and worse-disciplined banditti, has in the present case most unfortunately afforded the means of quibbling on the denomination of the demand, and has transformed a *legal* constitutional requisition of *military service* into an *unjustifiable* exaction

exaction of an *increased tribute*. And yet the original minute of the Governor-General rested the matter on its proper ground, " That Raja Cheyt Sing be required in form to " contribute his share of the burthen of the " present war, by consenting to the establishment of *three regular battalions of Seapoys*, to " be raised and maintained at his expence." (2d Report, page 26.) To this measure, there could exist upon Mogul principles, only one objection. It *might* have been urged that the demand exceeded the proportion of troops at which the Zemindarry of Benares, &c. stood rated in the books of the empire, or the actual number which it could now furnish. But *that plea* is obviated by our certain knowledge, that Cheyt Sing's ordinary infantry exceeded the number of *six* battalions : so that when he was required to furnish *three* to his Sovereign, he had nothing to do, but immediately reduce the same number at home. This mode of stating the rights and foundations of the transaction, at once shews the jesuitical sophistry of your observation, (Supplement, page 6,) " Your Committee cannot discover " any record to prove, that although an extraordinary demand of *money*, beyond the stipulated

“puted rent paid by the Rajah, was made  
 “in July, that the whole payment of it was  
 “*consequently* due the moment in which the  
 “demand was made.” That the demand in  
 question was for *money*, is an accident which  
 does not at all partake of the intrinsic merits of  
 the affair.—The demand was properly for *sol-*  
*diers*; the money was merely a commutation  
 or substitute. The soldiers were certainly due  
 when demanded, because the Sovereign was at  
 war; such being the tenure of the Zemindarry,  
*consequently the money was due*; because the due  
 quota of troops could not be raised, nor main-  
 tained without it. The war, and of course  
 the occasion for military service, had con-  
 tinued for two years, and was advanced into  
 the third, when the revolution at Benares  
 took place. From the first moment to the  
 last Cheyt Sing had exerted every artifice of  
 prevarication, subterfuge, and falsehood, to  
 protract, to modify, or to elude the demand.  
 In the first year he contrived to delay pay-  
 ment for near three months, (Supplement,  
 page 6.) In the second, no other answer could  
 be procured from him by the Resident, than  
 “a positive assertion that the Rajah *could not*  
 “pay it.” (2d Report, page 34.) At the  
 end



end of four months, however, when every softer method failed, he was dragooned into compliance. His conduct in the third year was equally perverse; past experience had no effect upon his avaricious obstinacy; and when nearly three months were expired, the Resident wrote to Calcutta, that "the Rajah, notwithstanding his *solemn assurances*, has hitherto paid *no part* of the balance of his subsidy. He has resumed the plea of inability, and I can form no opinion how long he may think proper to protract payment" (Page 46.)

On receipt of this letter, the patience even of Mr. Francis and Mr. Wheler was exhausted. They had hitherto opposed all compulsive measures, or even threats; but now they were roused to a sense of the indignity offered to government, and unanimously voted for the rigorous exaction both of the balance *due* upon his subsidy, and of a fine in punishment of his contumacy. The same arguments that have established the right of government to exact military service from its dependent Zemindars, will extend to all cases in which that military service can be applied; consequently to the requisition of *cavalry*, as well as of *infantry*. Cheyt Sing's establishment of

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the former, by his own acknowledgement, amounted to 1300 (2d Report, page 39.) though the Select Committee, in their Supplement (page 11) have reduced the number, undoubtedly by mistake, to 1200; From some documents in the Appendix to the Governor General's narrative, there is reason to suppose he maintained near 2000. The Resident, after various fruitless applications, delivered him a peremptory order to prepare 1000 horse; The Rajah, by his own confession, collected but 500 at most, and offered 500 burkundoffes, (miserable infantry) as a substitute for the remainder. The Select Committee observe upon this, " it is somewhat singular, " that the Governor-General declares in 1775, " that he did not mean to impose this demand " of cavalry on the Rajah, by compulsion; " and yet in 1781, his not complying with " this demand, is considered as such an act " of delinquency, as to form one of the two " direct charges of culpability and guilt; and " for the pardon of which he was to pay " largely, or a severe vengeance was to be " exacted for his delinquency." (Supplement, page 13.) Never was comparison more unhappy—never were two cases more dissimilar, than

than those here unnaturally classed together ! In 1775, in time of profound peace, and in the act of forming an agreement with the Rajah, Mr. Hastings shewed an unwillingness to saddle him with the necessity of constantly maintaining 2000 cavalry. General Clavering however understood even then, that the Rajah did "*keep up a large body of Cavalry.*" (Page 12,) and the Council General recommended to him to keep two thousand. In 1781, in the midst of all the exigencies of war, and under the sanction of that particular tenure, by which Cheyt Sing then held his Zemindarry, i. e. the constitutional obligation of military service, Mr. Hastings, as representative of the actual Sovereign, required of him the assistance of such cavalry as he then had in his pay, supposed, agreeably to the above quoted recommendation of the Council General, in 1775, to be 2000. The demand however was gradually reduced to 1500, and lastly to 1000. The Rajah acknowledged to have in pay 1300 (2d Report, page 49) yet at most offered but 500,—and as the Governor-General states in his narrative, (page 7) "*furnished none.*"



These instances of contumacy and disobedience appeared in the Governor-General's opinion, " evidences of a deliberate and " systematic conduct, aiming at the total sub-  
 " version of the authority of the Company,  
 " which design had been long and generally  
 " imputed to him," (Supplement, page 17)  
 The Committee, on the contrary, " can con-  
 " ceive these circumstances to have happened  
 " without any design whatever in Cheyt Sing  
 " to give umbrage to the Administration of  
 " Calcutta."—Nay, they can assert that  
*"succeeding events have clearly proved it."* And  
 yet, if these circumstances, combined with  
 the deliberate massacre of two companies, for  
 no ostensible cause whatever : with the after-  
 discovery of military stores, warlike preparati-  
 ons and numerous troops, all kept in profound  
 secrecy, and for no possible purposes of ne-  
 cessary defence : with the sudden revolt of  
 his whole Country almost at a signal, and  
 with the general good understanding which  
 instantly appeared between him and all the  
 other disaffected Chiefs in the neighbouring  
 Provinces, do not form a body of evidence  
 satisfactorily demonstrable of " treachery,  
 " perfidy, and rebellious violence," I know  
 not

not under what definitions, or by what kind of construction, treason and revolt can possibly have been expressed in any criminal Code, since the first institution of political Societies. But in the Reports of the Select Committee, insinuation is an arrant Proteus: No sooner have I caught him in one shape, than in the instant of conviction he eludes my grasp, and rises another being in the next page. We are now told, that "unless the  
 " deposal of Cheyt Sing, was a measure *ab-*  
 " *solutely pre-determined*, before the Governor  
 " General proceeded to acts of violence, the  
 " Rajah *might have been informed of the extent*  
 " *of his guilt.*" (Supplement, page 19.) And so He *was*. Mr. Hastings's first letter (2d Report, page 48) from Benares, expressly says, "The first step, which I judged it  
 " necessary to take, as the ground on which  
 " my future proceedings were to be conducted,  
 " was to *recapitulate in writing*, the several  
 " instances of his conduct, which for some  
 " time past, have repeatedly drawn upon  
 " him the severe reprehensions of the board;  
 " and to demand a *clear and satisfactory ex-*  
 " *planation.*" The answer sent by Cheyt Sing to this letter here described, was the  
 farthest

farthest from *clear* or *satisfactory*. It was filled with shuffling excuses and palpable lies; particularly the Rajah writes (in spite of his gross misconduct in delaying to furnish military aid) "I complied, *with the utmost readiness*, with the order You sent me for the payment of five lacks of Rupees on account of the war." (2d Report, page 49.) Mr. Hastings observed upon the whole of this answer, that it was "not only unsatisfactory in substance, but offensive in style, and less a vindication of himself, than a recrimination upon me." (page 50) Alarmed at these appearances, so different from the conduct of an Indian subject to his acknowledged sovereign, the Governor General, hesitating between the *necessity* of asserting the authority of that Government, of which He was representative, and the alarm which the full exertion even of justifiable severity might occasion at so critical a period—took the mild medium of an arrest. There is no clue whatever for the supposition that this very arrest, much less that the *deposal* of Cheyt Sing was "*a measure absolutely predetermined*," or even thought of, till his contumacious reply to the Governor-General's *ex-*  
*postu-*



postulation rendered some effort of rigour clearly indispensable. If the arrest were (and it cannot be doubted) an act growing out of unforeseen emergencies, what followed were events totally out of the Governor-General's option or controul. His prisoner fled, his troops murdered, himself surrounded with armed enemies, in a country of which he personated the legal monarch, and threatened with instant assassination—there was no possibility of avoiding extremities, no means of annihilating the treason, but by crushing the traitor:—no alternative, but by exemplary punishment, to avenge the *rights of insulted sovereignty*, or gallantly to perish in the unequal contest. It is a stigma on the Councils of the Company, on the politics of our Government, and on national justice, that it should have been possible, upon any resolutions formed here at home, upon any correspondence circulated abroad, or upon any instruction, hint, or insinuation from any interested person whatever, for the Governor-General to entertain the most distant suspicion of the probability of Rajah Cheyt Sing's restoration. Humanity, as well as policy, revolt

at the very idea. You, Sir, will join with me in pronouncing it a moral impossibility.

Having toiled through 16 pages of Your Supplement to the second Report, in the doubly unpromising attempt of demonstrating the criminality of Mr. Hastings, and the injured innocence of Cheyt Sing, You exhibit in the 20th page, all the melancholy sufferings of this "oppressed and unhappy man," under one point of view. It is, I confess, a grand display of the pathetic, equally admirable for affecting tenderness of language, and copious flow of invention: Worked up in a circumstantial climax of woe, each article gains more and more upon the commiseration of the reader, and each pause affords a fresh opportunity for the effusion of sentiment. But that shortness of sentence, which in so masterly a manner favours the burst of passion, is no less adapted to the perspicuity of investigation, and the convenience of reply. I shall therefore take the liberty to divide the influence of these bewitching periods, by an unaffected, unfeeling comment upon each; and it cannot but prove a satisfaction to You to reflect, that how much  
foever

soever I may detract from the authenticity of the subject, I shall add in the same degree to the merit of the *romance*. "An event," you say, "so extraordinary in itself, and of so much consequence, not only to the suffering party, but to every Tributary to the Company, whatever may be his rank or station, induced your Committee to investigate the subject with precision.—From *this investigation*" (of which I have already given ample specimens) "the following conclusions may be drawn:"

"If the consideration of *public services* performed to our nation by the father, is requited by a violation of public faith to the son, upon pretences the most frivolous"—

Comment. Bulwant Sing had not many *public services* to plead: and I am astonished how the President and Council of Bengal, in 1773, should allude to any *services* of the kind performed in 1764 (2d Report, page 11) when, *in that very year*, in the war with Sujah Dowla, his conduct betrayed so much duplicity, that the then Government wished to have him "*dispossessed of his Country, and his*  

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person,



"*person, if possible, secured.*" (page 5.) In 1765, he eloped from our army, and the letter from the Council, April 1, (page 9) is expressive of the strongest distrust, and complains of his "*actual violation of his treaty,*" by deserting our arms. Our Government was even obliged to relinquish in his favour a considerable unliquidated demand, "*in hopes of making it his interest to remain faithful.*" The public services performed by the father, and the violation of public faith to the son, are equally villainary.— See Mr. Hastings's excellent letter, (page 29, 30 and 31).

"If the solemn faith of a treaty, which confirmed the Tributary in the actual possession of his lands, be no longer considered of sufficient validity to protect him from oppression and extortion"——

Comment. I think I have clearly shewn that Cheyt Sing was *not exempted from military service*; by the tenure of his Zemindarry: so long therefore as the demands of Government, for the war establishment, did not exceed the extent of his common military force, there was no oppression or extortion in the case. The

Committee

Committee observe (supplement, page 19)  
 “that if there was *no boundary of right*, on  
 “which the Rajah could make his stand to  
 “the increasing demands of the Governor-  
 “General and Council, he could not be said to  
 “possess any right or property whatsoever.”

I answer—that there *was* a boundary; that  
 the number of his troops in actual pay, or an  
 equivalent to that number, was the precise  
 boundary in question; and that whereas  
 Cheyt Sing’s regular establishment is stated to  
 have been 7690 men (page 19) the Gover-  
 nor-General was much within the limits of  
*right*, when he peremptorily demanded 3 bat-  
 talions of seapoys, and 1000 cavalry.—A  
 requisition of this nature by no means inter-  
 fered with the stipulations of the Pottah and  
 Sunnud.

“If the just, regular and punctual per-  
 formance of all stipulated conditions, is found,  
 to be no security against new claims and new  
 exactions” —

Comment. Colonel Monson in his minute  
 respecting the Governor-General’s proposition  
 for engaging Cheyt Sing to maintain 2000 ca-  
 valry

valry (supplement, page 12) thus expresses himself. "I am of opinion, the Company should receive the Rajah's *assistance* on the same terms he *gave* it to the Vizier, or the present Nabob."—General Clavering states, that 500 of his cavalry actually "*assisted* under the command of the Captain of the Governor's guard, on the conquest of the Rohilla Country."—The sovereignty of Benares was yielded to us by the Vizier, "with all the powers and rights annexed to it," precisely as he had holden it: and the Committee now dispute our right to demand of Cheyt Sing *any assistance at all*.

"If a Tributary of the Company is found to have no other security for the possession of his lands, *which descended to him from many generations*, but the arbitrary power of the Governor-General, or executive Government of the Country"——

Comment. *Who* and *what* was Rajah Bulwant Sing's *father*, and where can it be found that Cheyt Sing came to the possession of his lands *by descent*?—The contrary is on proof above. Even had the Zemindarry been *hereditary*,



*ditary*, which, till settled by Mr. Hastings in 1773, most certainly was not the case — still it must have been held upon feudal principles, and the general laws of the Mogul empire. Military service is *military service*, and not the *arbitrary will of the Governor-General*. The possession of the land carried inherently with it that precise obligation, and its performance was a pledge for the security of that possession.

“ If the possession of wealth is to be considered as a state-crime, and heavy fines and penalties are to be laid on the possessors, with a view of rendering their power or their wealth less dangerous to the Company” —

Comment. This is a jesuitical inference from a partial statement of a paragraph in the Governor-General's narrative. After explaining the grounds on which Cheyt Sing owed obedience to the Company, and reciting the different acts of contumacy, by which he had forfeited that obedience, he proceeds to shew by what means he would extract *good* out of *evil*, and make the very punishment of his delin-

delinquency subservient both to the safety and profit of the state. " I left Calcutta," says he, (narrative, page 12) " impressed with " the belief that extraordinary means were " necessary, and those exerted with a strong " hand, to preserve the Company's interests " from sinking under the accumulated weight " which oppressed them. I saw a *political ne-* " *cessity* for curbing the *overgrown power* of a " great Member of their dominion, and mak- " ing it contribute to the relief of their press- " ing exigencies."—If Cheyt Sing were powerful enough to dispute his Sovereign's authority in *one instance*, (and that too upon unjustifiable excuses, and contrary to the very tenure by which he enjoyed his territory) he might soon have become equally refractory or dilatory in the payment of his stipulated rents—or have assumed any other undue pretension: and hence the necessity for curbing his overgrown power, degenerated into insolence. If his niggard obstinacy and shameless prevarications had defrauded his paramount of a *timely aid*, which it was his duty, as a *Zehindar* to have furnished, no wonder that the damages accruing from such default were laid to his account, or that he were compelled to contribute

contribute a larger portion of relief to those pressing exigencies, which his undutiful conduct had so much combined to aggravate.— It was not the “*possession of wealth*,” that was “*considered as a state crime*,” but a pertinacious reluctance to pay the just demands of Government; and if he relied on his wealth or power as sufficient to screen him from the justice of his Sovereign—he from that moment must be deemed a disaffected subject, his power and wealth were really dangerous, and it became equally prudent, just, and necessary to check them.

“ If the compliance with one arbitrary and  
 “ unjust demand, instead of securing the tri-  
 “ butary from further oppression, is instantly  
 “ followed by another demand so extravagant,  
 “ as to render a compliance with it utterly  
 “ impossible”——

Comment. False throughout.—The first demand was neither *arbitrary* nor *unjust*. I have proved it to be *legal* and *constitutional*; nor can a *forced submission* to superior power be strictly termed “*compliance*.” The second demand so far from being *impossible*, was the very reverse



reverse even of *extravagant*. It relates to the requisition for cavalry: and it is proved by Cheyt Sing's own confession, that he kept 1300 at least. "The number required," says the Governor-General in the 7th page of his narrative, "was 2000, and afterwards reduced  
 "to the demand of 1500, and lastly to 1000,  
 "but with no more success. He offered 250,  
 "but furnished none."

"If requisitions are made, unauthorized  
 "by any stipulation in the treaty, and a  
 "short delay intervenes before the requisition is finally complied with, if such delay is construed into evidence of high treason"——

Comment. The *requisitions* were made in the spirit of a *feodal obligation*, and the *stipulations of the treaty* had nothing to do with them. *Would a crown-lease in England absolve me from allegiance to his Majesty, or taxes to the State?* The "*short delay*" before compliance is proved to have been of several months in each year, and that upon pleas equally indecent and untrue. After all, the delay was never construed into evidence of  
 high

*high treason*, but treated for what it really was, *contumacy and disobedience*. When other *overt acts* had clearly established the *guilt of high treason*, the delay in complying with the demands of Government became one link in the grand chain of *evidence*, that clearly demonstrated *the previous existence of treasonable intentions*.

“ If Reports unwarranted, and ill-authenticated, — if suggestions of public danger and imputations of evil designs, ill-founded, improbable and impracticable are to be admitted as sufficient grounds for commencing hostilities ” —

Comment. Who commenced those hostilities? — Cheyt Sing. No *evil designs* were *imputed*, till the country was in *actual revolt*: No *public dangers* were *suggested*, till two Companies of Seapoys had been *massacred in cold blood*. These are *facts*, certainly not *ill-founded*, though they might be thought *improbable*: and *after perpetration* it is rather a bold figure of rhetoric to term them “ *impracticable*.” The “ *Reports*” alluded to, were not believed, at least no act was performed in con-

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sequence of such belief, till *after conviction*. But *Reports*, which upon after-discovery are found perfectly to tally with matter of fact, and of which *upwards of fifty affidavits* testify the veracity, can never be deemed “ *unwar-*  
“ *ranted or ill-authenticated.*”

“ If the distress of the East-India Com-  
“ pany, from whatsoever cause arising,  
“ should ever be considered as the smallest  
“ justification of measures, which are cruel,  
“ unjust, and oppressive to the natives of  
“ India” —

Comment. A mere *petitio principii* ! amplified with the customary tautology of inapplicable epithets. — The distress of the East India Company flattered Cheyt Sing with the hopes of exerting his contumacy and disobedience unpunished; and his misconduct was a justification for the Governor-General’s intended fine. His subsequent escape from arrest, his massacre of our troops, and open rebellion, were a most palpable *forfeiture* of his *allegiance*, AND CONSEQUENTLY OF HIS ZEMINDARRY.

“ If



“ If these conclusions be just and well  
“ founded”——

Comment. They most assuredly *are not* in any one instance, and therefore all farther notice of them is nugatory and absurd. But if such glaring misrepresentations are to pass for fact; if such odious partiality is to stand in the place of justice; and if the legislature, the Government, and the Company are to be deceived and misled by such jesuitical artifices, “*no situation can be more wretched and deplorable,*” than that of men, who in great and responsible offices have performed the most glorious and important services to their country, “*whose honour, lives and fortunes*” are exposed to the inveterate prejudices, the self-interested machinations, and exaggerating narratives of a Select Committee!—

I had intended, Sir, in this place to close my observations on your curious Supplement to the 2d Report.—But no sooner have I fairly combated and completely overthrown all Your unsupported assertions upon matter of fact, than I am pestered with speculative absurdities.

absurdities. Who would have expected to find a man of Your political experience, vindicating the *uniformity* of the line of advancement in our Indian Governments? yet You boldly advance (Supplement, page 18) “ *this regular and established mode of succession* “ *to power*, so frequently confirmed by practice, “ when opposed to the *great uncertainty* of “ *succession among the Princes of India*, has “ been a matter of admiration to the natives “ of Hindoostan.” I am as great a friend as You can be to a regular and uniform system of succession, but for my soul I cannot discover wherein the succession to the Chair of Calcutta can appear *less uncertain to the natives of India*, than the succession to the throne of Dehli! Did *no competition* arise concerning the succession, upon the unwarrantable pretext of Mr. Hastings’s resignation? Did no unexpected revolution ever take place in Fort St. George, “ dependant neither on “ *hereditary right, priority of birth, the appointment of the late professor, the election of the* “ *people*, nor any other *fixed or determinate* “ *rule?*”—Surely, Sir, You composed this paragraph in a very absent state of mind,—pondering, perhaps upon the singularity of the

the revolution, by which Messrs. Powell and Bembridge had *succeeded* again to *their* offices! — Alas, alas! the people of India well know, that there are other mysteries in the world, besides “ *the intrigues of the Seraglio* :” and that if an old woman from the inmost recesses of her Zennana can foment a rebellion in Oude, a patriot and legislator can impose upon the senses, and warp the judgement of half a nation for two years together, by interested, “ *ill-founded*,” and “ *ill-authenticated*” rhapsodies from a Committee Chamber.

The mention of the Seraglio naturally leads me to the subject of your 10th Report — much more naturally than an appointment to take into consideration the state of the administration of justice in the provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, could lead You to scrutinize the internal politics of the kingdom of Oude. But this circumstance serves to give You a more exclusive title to the composition before us, as your magnificent Chairman, with all his front, is no Hibernian. — This is the fourth Report which has already grown out of the Governor-General’s late



late journey to Benares and Oude; and I do not doubt but that from the very same materials, and with equal attention to facts, the Committee, if permitted, would contrive to fabricate half a dozen more Reports for the next sessions, all "*considered as their indispensable duty*" "An investigation into the "*causes assigned by the Governor-General*, for a "*breach of the public faith of the Company*, "*pledged by him and the Council-General*, "*in the most solemn manner, for the protection of the widow of the late Vizier Sujah Dowla, a woman of the first distinction, by birth and rank, in the empire of Hindostan,*" is the ostensible purport of your performance, and the poor helpless lady has found in You a most zealous and hardy advocate.

This lady, who is known by the denomination of the *Bow Begum*, advanced in the year 1775, a sum of money *to her son* the Vizier, to be applied to the exigences of the state, "on condition that she should be guaranteed by the Company in the full and quiet enjoyment of *her* estates, effects, and jagheers." (10th Report, page 4.) The public faith being accordingly

accordingly pledged to the *mother* of the Vizier, she continued to reside, under that protection, at Fyzabad. “ Not indeed in the  
 “ unmolested enjoyment of *her* rights ; for  
 “ your *Committee observe*, (page 4) that so early  
 “ as January, 1778, the English Resident,  
 “ Mr. Middleton, makes very strong representations to the Governor-General and  
 “ Council, of the Vizier’s treatment of his  
 “ *grandmother*.” No other Member of the  
*Committee*, Sir, can have any pretensions to this very conclusive *observation*: The *syllogism* effectually bespeaks its *author*. After the death of the Vizier Sujah Dowla, his widow, the Bow Begum, unwarrantably possessed herself of his effects. Our Resident at Oude writes (Appendix, No. 1.) “ I understand the  
 “ late Vizier deposited the *surplus of his revenues* with the Begum ; and having died intestate (or at least a will was never produced, *though one is said to be secreted by the*  
 “ *Begum*) it left a door open to the disputes  
 “ which have happened ; for according to the  
 “ *Koran*, and the *usages of the country*, the *Nabob* could *claim an infinitely greater share*  
 “ *than he has got*.” In another place he mentions to have insinuated to the Begum herself

self (Appendix, No. 1,) " That the treasures  
 " she possessed were *the treasures of the state*, as  
 " she had not succeeded to them by any *legal*  
 " *right*, and they had been hoarded up to pro-  
 " *vide against an emergency.*" Here we have a  
 woman *suspected to have secreted her husband's*  
*will*, and notoriously assuming to her private  
 use *treasures destined for the exigencies of the state.*  
 Her son, however, in a moment of distress,  
 was content to relinquish all *his legal right* in  
 those treasures, for a very scanty portion of  
 their amount. At this time, as well as at all  
 subsequent periods, the Old Lady seems to  
 have behaved with peculiar acrimony towards  
 him, for the Council-General, on the conclu-  
 sion of this transaction, thus write to their  
 Resident, at Oude, (Appendix, No. 1) " We  
 " think that the circumstances of the Nabob's  
 " affairs, and *the unfavourable disposition which*  
 " *his mother, the Begum, shewed towards him,*  
 " made it necessary for you to comply with  
 " his request, for affording *your assistance to*  
 " *persuade her to supply him with a sum of*  
 " *money.*" The Begum indeed had roundly  
 told the Resident, that " as for the Nabob,  
 " *she would not advance him a single rupee upon*  
 " *his own word, but sooner throw all her*  
 " *jewels,*



“jewels and money into the river.”—And he writes, “that the Begum claimed every article of the late Vizier’s property, *even to his military stores:*” and he bears testimony also to the very improper conduct of the Begum’s servants, “who have hitherto preserved a total independence of the Nabob’s authority, *beat the officers of his Government,* and refused obedience to his Perwannahs.” The language of this “helpless woman” appears on all occasions, sturdy and assuming.—In one letter she requests the Governor-General to displace the Nabob’s Minister, and put her confidants in his place; and that “whatever sums are due to the English Chiefs,” *she will cause to be paid out of the Revenues.*” In another she writes to the Resident, “You were a party in this affair, and took from me the sum of 56 lacks of rupees. If you will cause the 56 lacks to be restored to me, then the Coulnama will not be binding: and do not you then take any part in the affair, and then let Asoph ul Dowla and Murteza Khan,” (i. e. the Nabob and his minister) “*in whatever manner they are able,* take sums of money from me, they will then see the consequences.” The Nabob him-

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self

self declared to the Resident his own opinion of his mother's ambitious views, by observing that "*Two rulers were too much for one country.*" If Her language and Her conduct, as above described, do not *authorize*, they *palliate* at least, those severities which the Vizier is said to have exercised towards his mother, and which seem to have required the constant interference of our Resident to mollify. The general disposition however of both parties towards each other, is plainly deducible from their mutual recriminations, and mutual distrust. The Begum appears a "capricious, "inconstant, violent" woman, ambitious of acquiring, "*by the intrigues of the seraglio,*" management of all the revenues of the country. Possessed of immense treasures by a suspected fraudulent concealment of her husband's will, at best by a very dubious title, and *against the usages of her religion and country*, she "presumes to talk of appointing ministers, and governing kingdoms."—The Nabob is, by his mother, represented as a man "entirely inexperienced in the affairs of the "world, and ignorant of what is good or "bad," and by the Resident, as having "so "entirely lost the confidence and affections of "his

" his subjects, that unless some restraint is im-  
 " posed upon him, which would effectually se-  
 " cure those who live under the protection of his  
 " Government, from violence and oppression ;"  
 no man of reputation or property would long  
 continue to inhabit his dominions. Such were  
 the inclinations, and such the behaviour of the  
 two parties in 1776 ; the Resident then wrote,  
 " I find all my endeavours to reconcile her  
 " (the Begum) and the Nabob in vain." and  
 in another place " I have hitherto been un-  
 " able to satisfy the Nabob or the Begum. —  
 however, a specious formal kind of agreement  
 was then patched up between them, to which  
 the Resident was guarantee : But it cannot be  
 said to have been very satisfactory on either  
 side, as the Nabob could get but a *part* of  
 what the Resident thought him fully entitled  
 to demand, and even of that part it appeared,  
 " by the behaviour of the Begum's Eunuchs  
 " and servants, that they were inclined to pro-  
 " craftinate the payment upon any frivolous  
 " pretence that occurred." The disputes which  
 the Resident's interposition had lulled in 1776,  
 broke out with fresh violence in 1778. And  
 as far as appears upon the Committee's state-  
 ment of the case, there is *reason* to suppose



that the Council-General's authority with the Vizier, at that time, *silenced* at least, if it could not assuage His discontents. But there is *no reason*, either from any actual documents in the Report and Appendix, or from analogical conjecture and comparison, to presume, that the Begum's temper had abated any thing of its former violence, and her ambition of its pretensions; or that if her servants had "pre-  
 " served a total independence of the Nabob's  
 " authority, beat the officers of his govern-  
 " ment, and *refused obedience to his Perwan-*  
 " *nabs,*" in 1776, when she was really "*a*  
 " *helpless woman,*" at the absolute power and disposal of a despotic sovereign, her conduct should have become more moderate, or that of her servants more obsequious afterwards, when she flattered herself with an utter exemption from all controul, by virtue of the Company's guarantee.

In 1781, " The Province of Oude, having  
 " fallen into a state of great disorder and  
 " confusion, its resources being in an ex-  
 " traordinary degree diminished, and the  
 " Nabob Asoph ul Dowla, having earnestly  
 " entreated the presence of the Governor-  
 " General,

" General, and declared, that unless some  
 " effectual measures are taken for his relief,  
 " he must be under the necessity of leaving  
 " his country, and coming down to Calcutta  
 " to represent his situation," it was resolved  
 in Council, that the Governor-General should  
 visit that Province, and use his endeavours  
 for the re-establishment of its affairs. Be-  
 nares lay in his way, and having much reason  
 to be dissatisfied with Rajah Cheyt Sing, he  
 took that opportunity to bring him to order.  
 The unhappy consequences that followed,  
 have been already explained. Cheyt Sing  
 resisted his authority, fled from arrest, mur-  
 dered his guards, and commenced open re-  
 bellion, " Its contagion," Mr. Hastings ob-  
 serves in his narrative (page 26) " instantly  
 " flew to Fyzabad,"—which the Nabob  
 Vizier, in expectation of the Governor-  
 General's visit had already quitted. The  
 revolt at Benares commenced on the 16th of  
 August, and about the 8th of September,  
 the commotions are said to have begun in  
 Oude. The first interview between the Go-  
 vernor-General and the Nabob Vizier, was on  
 the 11th of September, at Chunar Gur: at  
 which time it was not probable that either  
 party

party should have received intelligence of the disturbances at Fyzabad, and therefore the Governor-General, in his letter to Mr. Wheler of that date (10th Report, page 9) confines his account to the rebellion in Gauzipoor. There is no document whatever *to prove*, that even at that moment Mr. Hastings had entertained the most distant idea of giving up the Company's Guarantee, which secured to the two Begums the possession of their Jagheers, much less that when he left Calcutta, such a design had ever once occurred to him.—But when he wrote a second time on the 18th of September to Mr. Wheler, He informed him, that the contagion had reached the Province of Oude, but that He “should dismiss the Nabob in a few days, “and doubted not but his troubles would “soon be quelled.” The next day being the 19th of September, the Governor-General, and the Nabob Vizier mutually exchanged certain articles of agreement, which had been concerted between them as the most probable means for restoring the Province of Oude “to its former state of affluence, good “order, and prosperity.” From a review of these dates, it is clear to demonstration, that

accounts



accounts of the insurrection at Fyzabad had reached Mr. Hastings, between the 11th and 18th of September: and it may be fairly inferred, that He and the Nabob agreed in considering "the military power and dominion assumed by the Jagheerdars" to have afforded at once the temptation and the means for rebellion. It was therefore settled between them, that the Nabob should be "permitted to resume such as he might find necessary," with a reserve that he should pay the nett amount of the collections of such as were guaranteed by the Company.—

At the head of the Jagheerdars were the two Begums: and to those who shall have observed the uniform ambition, violent temper, and habitual disobedience of those ladies, their eunuchs and servants, as described in the 10th Report, and who shall have perused the several affidavits in the Appendix, No. 3, to the Governor-General's Narrative, namely of Doond Sing L; of Ahlaud Sing M; of Denoo Sing N; of Ram Sing O; of Hurdeal Sing P; and of Bejy Sing Q; besides those of the Resident, of Lieutenant Colonel Hannay, and other European witnesses, who all swear either to the general disaffection of  
the

the Begums, or to particular and pointed acts of treachery and revolt, perpetrated at their instigation, and *in their name*, it will not be possible to doubt, that the Governor-General and the Nabob acted upon full conviction of their delinquency, in the present instance, as well as of their having “ invariably employed the *influence* of their “ Jagheers to the most pernicious purposes.” When these articles were drawn up, Mr. Hastings appears to have had no other view, than to strengthen the Nabob’s hands by a political suppression of that delegated authority, which was rising fast into independence and to increase his revenues by the sums in which the actual produce of the Jagheers should be found to exceed the nominal value of the grant. The Nabob, as a Sovereign, could not but wish such an addition to his own power, and the actual state of his country must have impressed him with an idea of its necessity. No wonder therefore, that upon his return to his capital, “ the Governor-General should expect that he would “ immediately have entered into the execution of the measures necessary for the accomplishment of the plan they had mutually

"tually agreed upon, and *particularly the re-*  
 "sumption of the *Jagheers*, as an act equally  
 "necessary to the restoration of peace, and  
 "to the discharge of his debts to the Com-  
 "pany." Imbecility and irresolution were  
 however the characteristics of the Nabob's  
 Councils, and it appears that the month of  
 December arrived without any progress hav-  
 ing been made in the business. But the  
 harshness of the Nabob towards the Begums,  
 from the first moment of his accession to the  
 musnud (which I have above described from  
 your 10th Report) added to his recent ex-  
 perience of their intrigues, leave no room to  
 suppose with You, (page 11) that "this  
 "temporizing and indecisive conduct" could  
 proceed from any tenderness he entertained  
 for his parents. True it is, the Governor-  
 General was alarmed, and with reason, at the  
 delay. To have returned to Calcutta, leav-  
 ing one grand end of his journey under an  
 apparent improbability of completion, would  
 have distressed a man less warm than him-  
 self for the interest of his employers. He  
 therefore pointedly hastened its accomplish-  
 ment, by the strong interference of the Resi-  
 dent.



dent, This was in the latter end of December, 1781.

At this period a new scene opens.—We have seen the Bow Begum openly countenancing an insurrection in the heart of her son's dominions, in September, 1781, and we have seen the Nabob entering into a specific agreement for depriving her of that undue influence which she derived from her jagheer, but allowing her the nett amount of its produce. About the latter end of September Asoph ul Dowla returned to his capital, at the earnest instances of the Governor-General, and for the express purpose of reforming the overgrown jagheers. At the same time our Resident at the Vizier's court received instructions from Mr. Hastings, to attend to the due execution of the articles of agreement just concluded. Some time in December the Resident informed the Governor-General, that the Nabob had shewn a great reluctance to enter on this business, but that he had at length appointed an Aumil to take charge of the Begum's jagheer. You are pleased to observe, Sir, (10th Report, page 20) that “the resumption of the jagheers was an act *totally unnecessary* to the re-  
“ *storation*

" restoration of the peace of the country, be-  
 " cause *that peace* had been restored before the  
 " resumption was made." The country, I  
 grant, had assumed the *appearance* of peace.—  
 The revolvers *rested on their arms*. It was ef-  
 fectually *to secure* future tranquillity, to de-  
 prive intrigue of its *resources*, and rebellion of  
 its *support*, that the resumption of the jagheers  
 was proposed. The clans in Scotland were  
 abolished, not to procure present quiet, but to  
 obviate the possibility of future disturbance.  
 Events amply justified the Governor-General's  
 impatience, and evinced the prudence, the  
 policy, the necessity of this resumption. For  
 although it be stated, " that the return of  
 " the Nabob had *effectually* restored the quiet  
 " of the country."—Yet we find that the in-  
 stant he proceeded to act upon the articles  
 stipulated between Mr Hastings and himself,  
 the standard of revolt was again set up, and  
 " *the Begum assembled a large body of troops*," (in  
 her son's capital) with a supposed design of  
 resistance. " A violent and threatening letter  
 " which" the Resident writes to " have just  
 " received from the Begum, would seem to  
 " leave no room to doubt of her intentions to  
 " support *the already declared licentiousness of*

“ *her servants, in opposing the Nabob's orders.*” It appears, (10th Report, page 10) that the Nabob's Amil for taking charge of the Begum's jagheers, was appointed *before the 19th of December*; and it was on the 12th of January following, that the Resident, in conjunction with the Nabob, found it necessary to assume them by force of arms. Averse to every species of subordination, and emboldened perhaps by former impunity, the two leading Eunuchs of this turbulent and imperious woman had exerted themselves during the whole of that interval, in assembling, and calling in armed men from all quarters: (Appendix, No. 6.) They had even fortified and entrenched themselves with a view to resistance, in the Begum's Kellah (or Castle.) And when they at last submitted to superior force, were found possessed of a very large store of ammunition, properly distributed—“ *drawn up in regular order, pieces loaded, and matches lighted.*” Such clear proofs of premeditated opposition to the commands of *their* Sovereign, *absolute* at all events with respect to *them*, and in *whom* (even if we admit the Begum herself to have had an independent right to her jagheer) *resistance* was certainly *rebellion*, and the preparations for  
 resistance



resistance *treason*, cannot be overturned by any  
 sophistical distinctions and prevaricating quib-  
 bles of a Select Committee. Nor could the  
*consequences* of this fresh provocation be other  
 than we find in the Report, *a seizure of the Be-*  
*gum's ill-gotten and ill-applied treasures.* This  
 brings me, Sir, to your grand master-piece of  
 insinuation, to your laboured attempts to infer,  
 that Mr. Hastings has sacrificed every moral  
 obligation, and every tie of national honour, to  
 the mere temporary advantage of his employ-  
 ers. Having stated the failure of the expected  
 relief from Cheyt Sing's wealth, and quoted  
 the Governor-General's declaration, "that  
 "the Company's interests could only be pre-  
 "served from sinking under the accumulated  
 "weight which oppressed them, by the ex-  
 "ertion, with a strong hand, of some extra-  
 "ordinary means." You pointedly and tri-  
 umphantly exclaim, "*he appears to have se-*  
 "*lected a new object for this exertion.*" No doubt  
 it had been one great motive of Mr. Haf-  
 tings's journey to Oude, to recover, (and  
 with justice) as much as possible of the enor-  
 mous balance in which the Vizier stood en-  
 gaged to the Company; as well as to alleviate  
 by

by an immediate fine on Cheyt Sing, the pecuniary distresses of the moment.—The two objects were perfectly distinct; and if in the one case the Governor-General has imparted to us his own secret of the intended mulct, in the other he has uniformly maintained, that he looked to a reform in the finances of Oude, for the means of a gradual extinction of the Vizier's debts.—With this professed determination he left Calcutta; upon these grounds he concerted his plan with the Vizier, and to these arrangements he confined his expectations for the Company's relief; in order to convict him of having "selected a new object" *per fas et nefas*, immediately upon and in consequence of his disappointment with respect to Cheyt Sing, it is incumbent on you to prove, decisively, *positively*, and incontrovertibly, that he not only proposed, but absolutely determined and concluded an agreement to this purpose with the Vizier, *viva voce*, at Chunar: and that the seizure of the Begum's wealth would and *must* have taken place, even had she quietly, obediently, and with a good grace, given up charge of her jagheers on the first requisition of the Nabob's Aumil. Every sentence

tence of your report proves by inference the direct contrary. No mention whatever, no hint, no suspicion of such an intention transpires, till the 13th of January, 1782, and then no more than a surmise. It bears no part whatever in the instructions from the Governor-General to the Resident; it is not alluded to in the agreements between him and the Vizier; and on the very 13th of January, when the Resident informs Mr. Hastings of his having been obliged, by force of arms, to put the Nabob's party in possession of the Begum's fortress, he appears totally unapprized of any design in either party, to appropriate her treasures to public uses. The first opening of the business comes in communication from the Nabob himself, and the very expression of his letter bears testimony to its being an *after-thought*, and an expedient *very lately devised*. "I have" says he, "to confirm  
 " and increase our friendship, even done that  
 " which was *not thought of, or resolved.*" (10th Report, page 12.) This was also on the 13th of January. The Governor-General, in his letter of the 23d of January, mentions, for the first time that "in addition to the former resolution  
 " of resuming the Begum's jagheers, the Nabob  
 " had



"had declared his resolution of reclaiming all  
 "the treasures of his family which were in  
 "their possession." (Appendix, No. 6.) If  
 these two resolutions had been co-existent, that  
 for resuming the jagheers could not have been  
 the "*former*." If the circumstance had been  
 mentioned to the Nabob at the time of draw-  
 ing up the articles of agreement in September,  
 1781, he would not have written in January,  
 1782, that he had done that, which was *not*  
*thought of*; and how much soever your Com-  
 mittee may perceive, by a perusal of the  
 Vizier's letters, "the absolute dependence of  
 his situation," (Page 21) *this* of the 13th of  
 January is beyond a doubt, both in stile and  
 subject, *exclusively his own*. Mr. Hastings, in  
 this letter of the 23d January, mentions, that  
 he had "strenuously encouraged and supported  
 "the Vizier" in the resolution of assuming  
 his mother's treasures, and founds his advice  
 on experience of the pernicious uses to which  
 they had been hitherto perverted. *Then* it is  
 also, that we have the first intimation of a de-  
 sign to apply this wealth to the liquidation of  
 the Company's demands. Mr. Hastings had  
 been originally satisfied with the hopes of a  
 gradual but regular discharge.—The new turn  
 of

of events, the incorrigible obstinacy of the Begum, and the just provocations given to the Nabob, presented him a brighter prospect; and by a wonderful co-incidence of fortunate occurrences with his own strenuous exertions, he was enabled to recover the whole of that debt *at once*, and within *two months* of the precise date of Mr. Francis's most exhilarating epistle, which assured the Directors, "that  
 "this debt, so far from being discharged,  
 "is by this time immoderately increased,  
 "and never can be discharged out of the  
 "revenues of Oude." (Appendix to the 2d Report, No. 7.) How much soever the Nabob had resolved to do that which was *not thought of*, and how much soever the Governor-General had encouraged him in his resolutions, no trace is to be found of the mode by which the sentiments of each party upon this head were communicated. We can therefore only judge that it must have been thro' the medium of some Vackeel, or confidential Minister, and most probably between the 19th of December, when it was known that the Nabob's Aumil had been repulsed in his attempt to take charge of the Begum's jag-  
 K heer,

heer, and the 12th of January, when the Nabob's troops entered her Kellah. Yet *even then*, after such a series of disobedience, treason, and revolt, no very harsh or violent measures seem to have been pursued with the old lady. The Resident writes on the 3d of Feb: "that in his letters of the 20th, 25th, and " 27th ultimo, he had mentioned that the " Bow Begum had finally *agreed to deliver up* " the treasures of the late Nabob."—*Therefore* they were *not forced* from her in the moment of victory, and in the ardour of rapacity. An interval of at least 12 days, by the Committee's own account, (page 13) passed before she agreed to surrender her wealth; and in that period we can but suppose parleys, proposals, and negotiations to have taken place (though not yet come to hand) by which the Begum was at length induced—perhaps not with the best grace in the world—to *agree* to deliver up her treasures. If She *did agree*, (and You, Sir, have not been pleased to controvert *that* point) the original *treaty* between Her and her Son was *dissolved by consent*, and the Guarantee *became void of course*. Where then is this "breach  
 " of



“ of the public faith of the Company,” this bugbear of “ a measure, which has rendered the English name odious and detestable” to be found?—Only, Sir, in Your heated imagination: in that repository of unnatural conceits, pathetic extravagancies, and incurable prejudices.

My letter has drawn to so unexpected a length, that I shall not stay to refute in form Your tedious comments on the Governor-General’s acceptance of ten lacks of Rupees from the Vizier. Mr. Hastings has thro’ life been so uniformly and so notoriously insensible to pecuniary advantages, that I almost wonder he should even now have troubled himself to utter a wish on the subject. The doctrine of presents, as a compliment of universal use in Asia, is perfectly understood in this Country. An act of Parliament prohibits the Company’s servants from the receipt of presents. But the same act expresses that any such present accepted, taken, or received, shall be deemed to have been received for the sole use of the Company.—Be it so.—Mr. Hastings accepted 10 lacks of ru-

pees, and in conformity to the act, appropriated them to the Company's service. But as this sum was over and above all the dues, debts, and demands of the Company on the Vizier, the Governor-General hoped the length, the importance, the integrity, and the success of his services, might reasonably be pleaded as a claim upon the deposit. He wishes to owe his fortune to the bounty of his Employers, not to the civility of the Vizier; and the validity of his pretensions will be weighed in an assembly, where, believe me, Sir, your credit will kick the beam.

I shall now take the liberty to close my present correspondence with you, and I flatter myself there will never more be occasion to renew it. Your political taper has long since stunk in the socket: Its flame, I think, expired in the whining letter to your enlightened constituents of Bristol. If appearances may be trusted, your public existence hangs on a very slender thread indeed; nor do I think it possible that the Select Committee should fulminate through another session.—But I may be mistaken. The minister

( 77 )

nister of the day may find it *convenient* to keep You above stairs. Should you, however, be again let loose upon the Governor-General, my pen is still at your service. And though I shall live to be ashamed of having wasted my time and trouble, in combating such unsubstantial fancies, I take a pride in subscribing myself,

Right Honourable Sir,

Your determined Antagonist

In the Cause of Mr. Hastings,

D E T E C T O R.

October 18, 1783.